

Souhegan WMPAAC Annual Report November 2004

Presented to His Excellency, Governor Craig R. Benson,
NH Senate President, Thomas R. Eaton
Speaker of the NH House of Representatives, Gene G. Chandler
Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Services, Michael P. Nolin
and the State Library

November 1, 2004

by

Souhegan River Water Management Planning Area Advisory Committee

In compliance with Laws of 2002, Chapter 278, the Souhegan River Water Management Area Advisory Committee is pleased to submit this annual report of the committee's findings and activities for 2004. This law defines the two committees for each river under the pilot program to advise the Instream Flow process—the Technical Review Committee (TRC) and the Water Management Area Advisory Committee (WMPAAC). According to Chapter 278, "Each Water Management Planning Area Advisory Committee shall make an interim report regarding its progress and findings on or before November 1 of each year of their existence to the Senate President, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Governor, the Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Services, and the State Library."

NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) maintains a website for the Souhegan WMPAAC at <http://www.des.state.nh.us/rivers/instream/souhegan.asp?link=meetings&meet=wmpa>. The website contains the minutes, agendas, and copies of all presentations and documents distributed at the WMPAAC meetings.

The first meeting of the WMPAAC for the Souhegan River instream flow pilot program was held at the Selectmen's Office at the Milford Town Office on March 5, 2004. Paul Currier, administrator of the Watershed Management Bureau of NHDES presented information describing the Instream Flow Program, the committee's duties, and details of the Souhegan program. Pierce Rigrod (representing Milford Conservation Commission) was elected chair, and Peter de Bruyn Kops (representing a water user) was elected vice-chair. The committee also elected two members to serve on the consultant selection committee – Thomas Neforas (representing Milford Public Works) and Gordon Leedy (representing Amherst Planning Board).

The two WMPAAC members, Neforas and Leedy, joined two Souhegan Technical Review Committee members and two NHDES staff members to form the Consultant Selection Committee. This committee's task was to select the most qualified consulting group with the best proposal for determining the protected flows and creating a water management plan for the Souhegan. The members of the selection committee met at Department of Environmental Services March 15, 2004 to rank and select a shortlist of five consultants from the eight consultants who submitted Qualifications & Experience statements. The shortlisted firms received a Request for Proposals dated March 25, 2004. Submittal deadline was April 15, 2004. The Selection Committee reviewed the consultants' proposals and then met April 26, 2004 to interview the consultants. UNH was selected unanimously.

The WMPAAC's second meeting was held April 23, 2004 at the Milford auditorium in the Town Hall. The contractor selection process and schedule were updated for the committee by NHDES. A presentation of Instream Protected Uses, Outstanding Characteristics, and Resources (IPUOCR) types was made to the Committee by the NHDES. Specific examples of these protected entities were solicited from committee members. Base maps were distributed on request following the meeting to committee members. A discussion of the Right-to-Know Law was held and resource handouts on this topic were distributed.

The WMPAAC reviewed the preliminary IPUOCR list created by NHDES. The UNH consulting team created a draft IPUOCR list date June 22, 2004. WMPAAC members received and commented on the draft list via email. The WMPAAC was invited to a Technical Review Committee meeting July 30, 2004 held in the NHDES auditorium where the UNH consulting team presented the draft report containing the final IPUOCR list divided between flow-dependent and non-flow-dependent entities. The report also proposed methods for determining the flow needs of the flow-dependent entities. Comments were due by August 13, and the report was revised based on the comments and Department directions. The final report and appendices completed October 1, 2004 can be found at <http://www.des.state.nh.us/rivers/instream/pdf/UNHReport100104.pdf> and <http://www.des.state.nh.us/rivers/instream/pdf/UNHReport100104appendices.pdf> or downloaded via file transfer protocol (ftp) at <ftp://ftp.des.state.nh.us/Watershed/Water%20Quality/>.

The WMPAAC held a meeting October 22, 2004 at the Milford banquet hall in the Town Hall. The focus of this meeting was to hear a presentation by the UNH consulting team on the Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis (MCDA) process to be used by the UNH consulting team to coordinate with the Affected Water Users and Affected Dam Owners to select from the various management alternatives for the Water Management Plan. The committee became familiar with this tool and how it will assist in applying this process to the Souhegan Water Management Plan. The process will be presented again with the first returns of site-specific information at the next meeting in the spring.

**SOUHEGAN RIVER WATER MANGEMENT PLANNING AREA ADVISORY
COMMITTEE (WMPAAC)**

<p>Mr. Spencer C. Brookes II Committee member Souhegan LAC 56 Burns Hill Rd. Wilton, NH 03086 (603) 654-6771 sbrookes@tds.net</p> <p>Representative Pierre W. Bruno NH House of Representatives 603 Lyndeboro Rd. New Boston, NH 03070-1224 (603) 487-2612 brwnston@gsinet.net</p> <p>Mr. Jay Chrystal c/o ChemServe Laboratories 317 Elm Street Milford, NH 03053 (603) 673-5440 jay@chemservelab.com</p> <p>Mr. Peter de Bruyn Kops (Vice Chair) 427-3 Amherst St. #341 Nashua, NH 03063 (603) 673-3551 water@acugen.com</p> <p>Mr. Stephen J. Densberger Executive Vice President Pennichuck Water Works P.O. Box 448 4 Water St. Nashua, NH 03061 (603) 882-5191 steve.densberger@pennichuck.com</p> <p>Mr. Nelson R. Disco (Chair) Chairman, Merrimack Planning Board 42 Wilson Hill Rd. Merrimack, NH 03054 (603) 424-3120 ndisco@compuserve.com</p>	<p>Ms. Diane Fitzpatrick Committee member Souhegan River LAC 113 Lovejoy Rd. Milford, NH 03055 (603)672-6016 diane-nh@earthlink.net</p> <p>Mr. F. Vincent Gerbino Quality Control Manager and Compliance Officer Monadnock Mountain Spring Water Co. 577 Greenfield Rd. Francestown, NH 03043 (603) 547-8300 Monadnock3@tellink.net or Monadnock Mountain Spring Water P.O. Box 518 Wilton, NH 03086 (603) 654-2728 Ext. 222</p> <p>Mr. Gordon Leedy Vice Chair Amherst Planning Board 7 North Meadow Rd. Amherst, NH 03031 (603) 644-0888 gleedy@vhb.com</p> <p>Mr. Lawrence R. Major Jr. Environmental Health and Safety Officer Pike Industries 3 Eastgate Park Rd. Belmont, NH 03220 (603)527-5182 lmajor@pikeindustries.com</p> <p>Mr. George May Chairman Souhegan River LAC 157 Naticook Rd. Merrimack, NH 03054 (603) 883-3409 georgemay@msn.com</p>
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<p>Mr. Thomas Neforas Assistant Public Works Director Milford Public Works 289 South St. Milford, NH 03055 (603) 673-9441 tneforas@milford.nh.gov</p> <p>Mr. Timothy D. O'Connell 483 Federal Hill Rd. Milford, NH 03055 (603) 673-2963 tocnoc@aol.com</p> <p>Senator Andrew R. Peterson NH State Senate 63 Pine St. Peterborough, NH 03458 (603) 924-8563 andrewpeterson@adelphia.net</p> <p>Ms. Angela Vincent Senior Environmental Planner Nashua Regional Planning Commission P.O. Box 847 115 Main St. Nashua, NH 03061 (603) 883-0366 x15 Fax (603)883-6572 angiev@nashuarpc.org</p> <p>Ms. Nancy Rose Redling President Pratt Pond Association 190 Lower Pratt Pond Rd. New Ipswich, NH 03071-3108 (603) 878-4672 roseassoc@aol.com</p>	<p>Mr. Pierce Rigrod Commission member Milford Conservation Commission 20 Pleasant St. Milford, NH 03055 (603) 672-5002 prigrod@des.state.nh.us</p> <p>Mr. William F. Ruoff Director Milford Public Works 289 South St. Milford, NH 03055 (603) 673-1662 bruoff@milford.nh.gov</p> <p>Mr. Robin Warren Amherst Country Club 69 Walnut Hill Rd. Amherst, NH 03031 (603) 673-1923 robinwar@aol.com</p>
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Contact: C. Wayne Ives, P.G., Hydrogeologist
Instream Flow Specialist
Watershed Management Bureau
NH Department of Environmental Services
PO Box 95 - 29 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03302-0095
Telephone 603-271-3548
Fax 603-271-7894
Email wives@des.state.nh.us
<http://www.des.state.nh.us/rivers/instream/>